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*Several Arguments proving, that our Trade to
AFRICA, cannot be preserved and car-
ried on effectually by any other Method, than
that of a Considerable Joint-Stock, with exclu-
sive Privileges.*

I. **T**HE *Dutch* (who of all Nations whatsoever are generally allow'd to be the People now extant, who have given the most convincing Proofs of their consummated Knowledge and Experience in Trade) have laid it down for a Maxim, that in all foreign Trades where the Trade must be maintain'd by Force and Forts on the Land, and where they cannot conveniently keep up an Amity and Correspondence by Ambassadors only, there seems to be an absolute Necessity of carrying on such Trades, by Joint-Stocks. And certainly, by parity of Reason, the same Maxim must hold equally good with us, as with them. Unity in their Councils, and an Uniformity in their Rules of Management, has laid the Foundation of that State, and rear'd it up to that mighty degree of Strength and Power which makes them now so considerable both at Home and Abroad; according to their own Motto, *Concordiâ res parvæ crescunt*. And tho' they be the great Asserters of Liberty, and do Exercise it without Contrôll or Limitation, as to all other Trades; yet, upon the Foot of the aforesaid Maxim, they have always found it necessary to carry on their Trades to the *East-Indies* and the Coast of *Africa*, only by Companies with Joint-Stocks and exclusive Privileges; and that, by reason of the great Charge, Danger and Difficulties commonly attending them. Yea, these Companies are always protected and defended by the Laws of their United Provinces, which are of the same force with them, as Acts of Parliament are with us: But tho' we have likewise had Companies with Joint-Stocks, for trading to the *East-Indies* and the Coast of *Africa*; yet those not having been established with the Sanction of Parliamentary Constitutions, a Door was always left open, for frequently disturbing their Measures, and interrupting the Progress of their Trades and Acquisitions, chiefly by reason of a divided Interest always kept up among our selves: Insomuch, that it might have been properly enough said, that we had verified the very Reverse of the *Dutch-Motto*, viz. *Discordia res magnæ dilabuntur*.

II. Whenever we see several great and wise Nations having various Forms of Government, and whose Measures are influenced by different Inclinations and Interests; yet conspiring, as it were by universal Consent, in the same Means, for acquiring the same Ends of Profit, Power, and Honour, we may reasonably conclude, that they are much nearer the right way for accomplishing those Ends, than any Set of private Men whatsoever, holding contrary Opinions; especially when sway'd by personal Profit or Loss, or by any capricious Humour, Pique or Prejudice against some other interested Party. Thus we see that how different soever the several and respective Interests of the *French, Dutch, Danes, Brandenburgers, &c.* are, with respect to one another, yet they all do center in this positive Opinion, That Joint-Stocks with exclusive Privileges, and the having Forts and Settlements on the Coast of *Africa*, for maintaining a constant Coercive Power there, and for preserving Alliances with the Natives, are by much the properest Means for carrying on that Trade, with Security, Credit and Advantage: And therefore, considering likewise how far the *Royal-African-Company* of England and their Predecessors have proceeded, and do still, after many Years Experience, insist upon the same Topick; it looks like too much Presumption and a self-conceited Arrogance, in some few private Persons (who seem now to personate the separate Traders here) to pretend to set up their own humourfom Opinion dogmatically against the consummated Experience, and universal Suffrage of the whole trading World beside; unless they bring better Evidence for supporting their bare Opinion, than any weak Reason adduced by them as yet.

III. There is a Maxim of Policy which holds good among Companies for Trade, as well as Kingdoms and States; That where ever any Power or Force is to be exercised, the more contracted and united that Power is, the more prevalent will be the Effects thereof. Applicable to this is the dying Old Man's Advice to his Sons, represented in the well-known Fable of the Bundle of Arrows: And the great Reason for the late Union of the two Kingdoms of *England* and *Scotland* (tho' even before then, they were separately under the Government of one Sovereign Prince) was to corroborate their Strength by making them one undivided Kingdom; the same in Interest, Inclination and Power, both in Offence and Defence; *Vis unita fortior*. So likewise it's very observable that, tho' the *Dutch* traded, for some time, to the *East-Indies*, by several Joint-Stocks belonging separately to the respective Provinces which raised the same, yet finding upon Tryal, that the different Interests of their several Joint-Stocks did interfere one with the other, the States did (contrary to the Native Humour and Genius of a Republick) incorporate all these Joint-Stocks into one common Capital; to the end that, for the general Interest and

and Advantage of the whole, the same might be the more equally manag'd, by certain uniform Rules of Government, both Abroad and at Home.

IV. A farther Instance of the Preferableness of carrying on any such Trade by a Joint-Stock, may be had nearer Home, from a Case exactly parallel to that of the *Royal-African-Company*: For our Trade to the *East-Indies* was establish'd and carried on, for many Years, much after the same Manner, and struggling with such like Interruptions and Difficulties, from time to time, as have been already narrated, in relation to our Trade to *Africa*; till in the Year 1698. the private Traders to the *East-Indies* obtain'd an Act of Parliament for laying that Trade open in the Method of a regulated Company: Reserving only the *Old-Company's* Right of trading in manner, for the Term, and to the Effect mentioned in the said Act: Yet, upon Tryal, even those who procured that Act, found it necessary to unite themselves and their several Stocks in Proportion to their respective Subscriptions, so as to carry on the Trade thereafter, only with one common Joint-Stock. And tho', at least to all outward Appearance, there seem'd to be an irreconcilable Contest, and stated Emulation, between the *New* and the *Old East-India-Companies*; yet both of them became so very sensible of the destructive Consequences necessarily attending a divided Interest in trading to those remote Parts, that they are now at last happily conjoin'd into one Company, having the same Joint-Stock, Interest and Designs; and it is also very remarkable, that those Forts and Settlements in *India* which seem'd to have been formerly so much slighted and deprettiated by the separate Traders thither, do now make up a considerable Article in the Estimation of their own present Joint-Stock.

V. As Contraries appear best, by stating them in Opposition, one to the other; so in all dubious Cases, of the same, or like Nature, the happiest Experiences are those which have been gain'd by the Calamities of Times past: Thus, while our Trade to the *East-Indies* lay quite open from the Year 1653, to the Year 1657, that Method proved so very destructive to the several private Traders thither; that the governing Power at that time found it necessary to unite them all into one Company with one Joint-Stock, &c. So likewise while the Trade to *Africa* was laid open before the Restauration of King *Charles* the Second, the *Dutch* Company took such Advantage of our separate Traders, that their Losses were computed at about 300000*l*. And it is manifest that, during the small Number of Years in which the present *Royal-African-Company* had the Countenance and Protection of the Government, so as not to have had their Measures embarrassed by any separate Interest at Home, the *British* Interest on the Coast of *Africa*, was maintain'd and advanc'd much more securely, creditably and advantageously, for the Common Interest of this Kingdom, and the Plantations thereunto belonging, than ever it was either before, or since, that time: And had the Privileges of the Company's Charter been then establish'd by Act of Parliament, so as to have prevented the Domestick Divisions which have since happen'd in that Trade, by reason of our separate Interests, 'tis more than probable, that the *British* Interest had, by this time been in a more flourishing Condition than that of any other *European* Nation whatsoever, on the Coast of *Africa*.

VI. There was never yet any substantial Commerce in the World carried on, but by means of mutual Alliances and Confederations made with the Natives, how barbarous soever: And it is manifest, that Alliances of this Nature can be made only by Princes themselves, or Powers derived from them to Bodies Politick and Communities, who are stable, Permanent and Responsible, continually ready upon the Place, by their Agents, to expostulate with or give Satisfaction to their Allies; which can never be maintain'd with Individuals or single Persons, who being Transient and Mortal, no Man knows where to find them, when they happen to commit any Injuries: And therefore a Society establish'd with the Sanction of a Parliamentary Constitution, and having a sufficient Joint-Stock, with exclusive Privileges, and a Coercive Power to maintain their Alliances, as well as to defend their Trade, must needs of course be in a more probable way for answering all the Ends proposed by the Alliances above-mentioned.

VII. Without some fix'd Society, invested with a considerable Joint-Stock and suitable Privileges, there can be no sure Dependance upon having the *British* Plantations supplied duly with sufficient Numbers of Negroes at moderate or certain Rates; for while the Trade lies open, scores of private Traders do Trade for one Year, who are never heard of thereafter; and these minding only a present Gain, do exact upon, and squeeze the Planters at a most extravagant rate; without any regard to Consequences, as having no thoughts of going thither again: Whereas a settled Society having the sole Management of the Trade, must, in all their Measures, have a special regard to Perpetuity; and thus it was during the short time that the *Royal-African-Company* enjoy'd the Trade exclusively; they sold their Negroes at very moderate rates, and trusted the Planters, from time to time, with considerable Sums of Money, till they could conveniently pay the same out of the Produce of those Negroes Labour, which private Persons are seldom able or willing to do; and altho' they would, yet one substantial Creditor is always much more indulging and encouraging to a Debtor, than an indefinite Number of several petty Creditors can be supposed to be; because each of these having different Views, as well as separate Interests do commonly strive who shall out-do the other in Diligence for recovering Payment, *quovis modo*, till they ruin the common Debtor, and render him incapable of doing Justice to either: Whereas, were he concern'd only with one Society of discreet Persons, they would, for their own Interest, have a generous and compassionate regard to his Circumstances; and, by a reasonable Forbearance, enable him to pay themselves; and to continue a Correspondance and Dealing with them; and to improve his own Plantation into the Bargain: Which indeed is, or at least ought to be, the chief End of the *Negro-Trade*; because upon that wholly depends the great National Advantage produced by the Plantation-Trade to *Britain*.

VIII. While the Trade to *Africa* lies open we can never settle the *Asiento*, nor make any advantageous Contracts with the *Spaniards* or *Portuguese*, to furnish them with Negroes in their *West-Indies*: For as, on the one Hand, they'll have no Dependance on the uncertain Engagements of private Persons, whose

whose Circumstances cannot be well known to them; so, on the other Hand, private Persons can never (without a mixture of Folly and Madnes) undertake to furnish certain Numbers of Negroes, for a term of Years, at determinate and fix'd Prices; when, at the same time, they cannot possibly know but that, by reason of the different interfering Interests of many Separate Traders, the Prices of Negroes upon the Coast of *Africa* may be so far advanc'd, as that the prime Cost may far exceed the Prices at which they contracted to deliver them in the *West-Indies*; which would unavoidably be a very great Loss to the Nation: Whereas a Society vested with the sole Power of trading to *Africa*, cannot fail of taking their Measures in making such Contracts, so as to gain considerably by them: And it is a certain Truth, that whatever is gain'd by any of Her Majesty's Subjects, whether in a Society or separately, from any Foreign Nation, must of course be a National Advantage in adding to the Strength and Riches of this Kingdom.

IX. While the Trade to *Africa* lies open, it can never be distinctly known how far (Nationally speaking) we may be either Gainers or Losers by it: For we may have the Appearance of a brisk and flourishing Trade, by seeing a considerable Number of Ships going out and coming in; yea, and perhaps some few particular cunning Persons gaining considerably by Commissions, &c. while at the same time, our National Interest is sinking daily in the manner formerly narrated, till it dwindle away to nothing at last; and be insensibly twisted out of our Hands, by the cunning Stratagems and undermining Practices of our Foreign Competitors, before we can have sufficient time to apply a Remedy, for recovery thereof: Whereas, by confining that Trade to one Joint-Stock, the Great Council of the Nation may always be satisfied, from time to time, of the Company's Proceedings, both at Home and Abroad; so that by knowing where the Distemper lies, they may with the greater Assurance, prescribe a Cure, as occasion may require: Nor can it justly be supposed, but that the View of a perpetual and uninterrupted Succession in the Management of that Trade, must, as well as the Hopes of personal Profit, naturally inspire the Managers with a much nobler Emulation, in exerting their utmost Endeavours for advancing our National Interest, beyond that of any Foreign Competitor on the Coast of *Africa*, than can be reasonably expected from the irregular, disconcerted and interfering Measures of an uncertain Number of raw and unexperienc'd Novices, trading separately, by divided Interests, liable to no Censure but their own: And having no other imaginable Views, but only little selfish present Gain; tho' the National Interest should utterly perish thereby.

X. The wisest of Men tells us, That in the Multitude of Counsellours there is Safety; and beyond all Peradventure it is so: For our Understandings are so weak, our Knowledge so circumscrib'd, and our Lives so short; that without conjoining the Experience of some Ages together, we are, of our selves, able to make but a very indifferent Proficiency, even in the easiest and most intelligible Science, that can be thought of. However indeed some few there are, of all Ages and Countries, who must be allow'd to have a much more transcendent Genius for several Purposes, than the generality of the rest of Mankind. And therefore it is the great and singular Advantage of all select and compacted Societies, having the same undivided Interests, and which are establish'd upon solid Foundations, that the Wisdom, Knowledge, Capacity, Experience and Application of these few, do commonly supply the Defects of many other Persons, who are not endow'd with an equal Share of the like Qualifications.

Thus a Joint-Stock-Company, establish'd upon a fix'd and suitable Constitution, cannot fail of trading with much more Security, and a far greater Probability of producing many National Advantages, than private Persons trading separately can do. For, the former have not only the Discoveries, Observations and Experience of their Predecessors standing always upon Record before them, by a continued Series of Journals, &c. But (as in the Body Natural) so even the weakest Member of such a Society may, in some respect or other, be made Useful to the common Interest of the whole Body Politick; yea and partake too, in some Measure, of the Knowledge, Understanding and Judgment of those other Members whom God has bless'd with a more than ordinary Portion thereof.

And as these Societies do commonly find out and make choice of such deserving Persons as are thought most capable of serving their Interest, in the several Qualities of *Generals, Chiefs, Agents, Factors, Correspondents, Masters and Navigators of Ships, Supercargoes, Chyrurgions, Secretaries, Clerks, Accountants, Book-keepers, Cashiers, Store and Ware-house-keepers, &c.* So they can best afford the giving them such suitable Salaries and other Encouragements, as (if but tolerably well principld) might put them above the Temptation of being corrupted: And it is most certain, that if the *African Trade* were once fully settled and fix'd on the the Basis of such a suitable Constitution as would naturally oblige the Natives to come to our Terms and Conditions of Barter, instead of imposing theirs upon us, as now they do; the Profits thereof could very well bear that Charge. So that such a Society might then stand in Place of an Accademy, for training an indefinite Number of People, in the regular Knowledge of all Matters relating to the several Branches of the *African Trade*; and the Nation would of course reap the Honour and Advantage thereof.

The Reverse of all which, may be easily gather'd from that infallible Position in the Gospel, *A House divided against it self cannot stand*: The meaning whereof relates to Kingdoms, Cities and Corporations, as well as private Families; as appears expressly by the Context.

Now let us suppose an indefinite Number of Persons trading separately from hence to *Africa*; their having quite separate Stocks must consequently make them have divided Interests: And as we cannot reasonably suppose them to be all equally endow'd with the same necessary Qualifications, so they must unavoidably have different Views and Rules of Management: And therefore (for want of both the correlative and subservient Means of Assistance afore-mention'd) the generality of these separate Adventurers, trusting most commonly both the Projection and absolute Management of the Voyage to their respective Ship-Masters, who indeed are as Ignorant of the Trade, as those who employ them, must of course come off with Loss; when perhaps some few cunning and designing Persons among them may get some private Advantage to themselves, at the Expence of irrecoverably losing the whole Trade to the Nation at last. Yea, whenever they die, their Experience dies with them.

XI. In all remote Places of Trade, the Countries of petty Princes, with whom Her Majesty cannot conveniently have State-Alliances, and regular Correspondencies, by Ambassadors, or other publick Ministers, there is a Necessity of maintaining a Power equal at least with that of other *European Nations*; without which it is observed, that such petty Princes, by the cunning Designs of stronger Powers, have often been drawn into Contracts, whereby, for small Considerations, they agree to exclude all other Nations from the Trade of their respective Countries: Examples of this Nature are frequent, not only from the Impositions of the *Dutch-East-India-Company*, upon the Natives of *Japan*, *Ambony*, *Pollaroon*, *Polloway*, *Dam*, *Macassar*, *Zelon*, *Bantam*, &c. But likewise from the Practices of the *Dutch-West-India-Company*; who taking Example by the former, have play'd the same Game over and over again, on the Coast of *Africa*. Witness particularly their having contracted with the Natives of *Fantyn* to pay them a good round Sum of ready Money in Hand, besides a certain yearly Pension in Consideration of their Aid in expelling the *English* from *Cormanteen-Fort*, and of their other Auxiliary Assurances ever since. Under the Pretext of which Methods, they set up a pretended legal Title for justifying their Proceedings in endeavouring to undermine and exclude the *British* and all other *European Nations*, from trading upon that Coast, so that, altho' it had been Practicable; to have carried on the Trade to *Africa*, in an open regulated way, if other Nations had followed the same Method (which is never to be granted) yet in regard that all other *European Nations* do trade thither by Joint-Stocks; it would seem as unequal a Match to enter and engage raw and unexperienced private Traders against such compacted and united Constitutions of experienced Counsellours, as to fight a disordered undisciplin'd Multitude, against a well govern'd Army of Veteran Troops supported with an inexhaustible Treasure.

XII. The *Dutch-West-India-Company* having no Settlements or Plantations in the *West-Indies*, but only that of *Curacao*, a mere Rock and *Surinam* a most unwholsom Country for the most part under Water; and therefore scarcely improveable so as to quit Cost; and notwithstanding their indefatigable and very chargeable Endeavours for bringing it to bear, have (it seems) bent their Thoughts now upon settling Sugar-Plantations on the Gold-Coast of *Africa*; a Place as improveable as the best of our *West-India-Plantations*. They have already sent for 200 *Whidah-Slaves*, and expect, by their next Shipping from *Holland*, all proper Materials for making Sugar in *Guinea*; wherein if Successful (as in all probability they may be, if not counter-acted in that Design) it is much to be feared, (considering the Multitudes of Negroe-Slaves on that Coast, whose Labour is very cheap, and the shortness of the Voyage from *Holland* to the Coast of *Guinea*, in respect of that to the *East-Indies*, from whence they already import great Quantities of Sugar) that in some few years Time, when our *American Colonies* will be obliged to make Sugar at so much greater Charge than the *Dutch* in *Africa*, they may be able to undersell us by very much, and consequently have the Staple of Sugars over all *Europe*, as they have already, that of *All-Spices*: Which Consideration alone (barring the many other weighty ones formerly mention'd is of it self sufficient to open our Eyes and convince us of the absolute Necessity of speedily settling and fixing our Trade to *Africa* in a Joint Stock-Company, with exclusive and other suitable Privileges: As the only way of splitting and defeating the Designs of our Competitors in that Trade, with a Wedge of their own Timber; that is, by taking such proper Measures with the Natives, as are not Practicable to be done in the Method of an open Trade otherways than by making open War upon our Neighbours: Which is a Remedy, I hope, we shall not run our selves upon.

It is hoped that upon serious and Mature Consideration of all the Premises, any intelligent and impartial Reader will be inclinable to conclude.

- 1st. That the Preservation and Improvement of the Trade to *Africa*, is a matter of very high Importance to this Kingdom and the Plantations thereunto belonging.
- 2dly. That Forts and Settlements on the Coast, and Alliances with the Natives, are absolutely necessary for the Defence, Preservation and Improvement of that Trade.
- 3dly. That by any other Method, than that of a Joint-Stock, with exclusive Privileges, the said Forts, Settlements and Alliances can never be effectually maintain'd; and the said Trade carried on, so as to be made a permanent, creditable and advantageous Trade to Britain

Several Arguments proving, that our Trade to *Africa* cannot be preserved and carried on effectually by any other Method, than that of a Considerable Joint-Stock, with exclusive Privileges.